

Youth Beliefs About Dangers of Spit Tobacco

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Spit tobacco, or smokeless tobacco, comes in two forms: moist snuff and chew. Snuff is a finely ground tobacco and is usually placed between the bottom lip and gum and held there. This is also referred to as “dipping.” Chewing tobacco is shredded tobacco leaves placed between the cheek and gum. Spit tobacco contains 3,000 chemicals, 28 of them have been identified as cancer-causing agents including formaldehyde, nicotine, arsenic, cadmium, and polonium-210.

The Facts

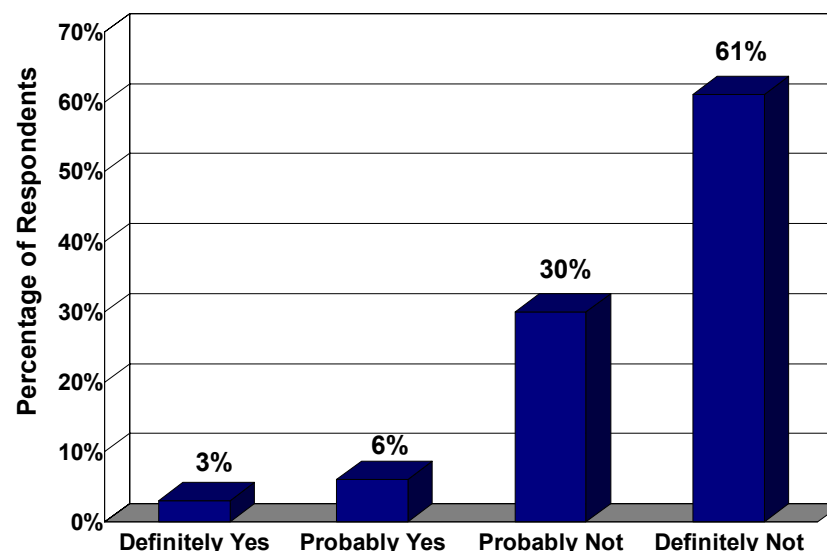
Data from the 2002 Indiana Youth Tobacco Survey Show:

- Approximately 3% of middle school and 5% of high school students reported using smokeless tobacco within 30 days prior to the survey.
- Nine percent (9%) of middle school and high school students believe that smokeless tobacco is **definitely** or **probably safer** than cigarettes.
- Whereas, the majority of Hoosier middle school and high school students (61%) believe that smokeless tobacco is **definitely not safer** than cigarettes, almost one third (30%) believe that smokeless tobacco is only **probably not safer** than cigarettes.

Implications

- Although few Hoosier youth report using smokeless tobacco, thirty-nine percent (39%) of Hoosier youth did not express a strong belief that *smokeless tobacco is not safer* than smoking (9% stating that it is safer and 30% stating that it is only probably not safer). These youth are vulnerable to tobacco industry marketing and are open to possible initiation.
- With programs targeting smoking, especially among youth, tobacco control advocates must be vigilant about products that purpose to be “safer” alternatives to cigarettes. This issue is especially pertinent to Indiana that has been used as a test market for some of the alternative tobacco products.

Do you think that chewing tobacco, snuff, and dip are safer than cigarettes?
Responses from high school and middle school students.



Sources: 2002 Indiana Youth Tobacco Survey; Kozlowski LT, Pillitteri JS. Beliefs about “Light” and “Ultra Light” cigarette: an overview of early efforts and published research. Tobacco Control 2001; Thun MS, Burns DM. Health impact of “reduced yield” cigarettes: a critical assessment of the epidemiological evidence. Tobacco Control 2001; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Health Consequences of Smoking: A Report of the Surgeon General*. Office on Smoking and Health, 2004

Youth Beliefs About Dangers of Alternative Tobacco Products

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The introduction of new tobacco products marketed as “safer” alternatives to smoking has had a direct impact on Indiana in recent years. In 2001, Brown & Williamson (B&W) used Indianapolis and surrounding central Indiana as a test market for Advance™. In 2002, Ariva® (B&W) arrived in stores, followed by Quest® (Vector Tobacco) in 2003, as Indiana was one of seven states testing this new line of products.

Previous research shows that smokers have misconceptions about the health risks of so-called “light” and “ultralight” cigarettes. Successful marketing of the tobacco companies fostered these beliefs. Scientific studies indicate that these products have not resulted in different rates of tobacco-related deaths and diseases compared to those who smoke “regular” cigarettes. Smoking cigarettes that have a lower yield of tar does not substantially reduce the risk for lung cancer. Tobacco companies continue these deceptive marketing practices as they introduce new “reduced risk” products continuing to appeal to the health concerns of smokers.

The Facts

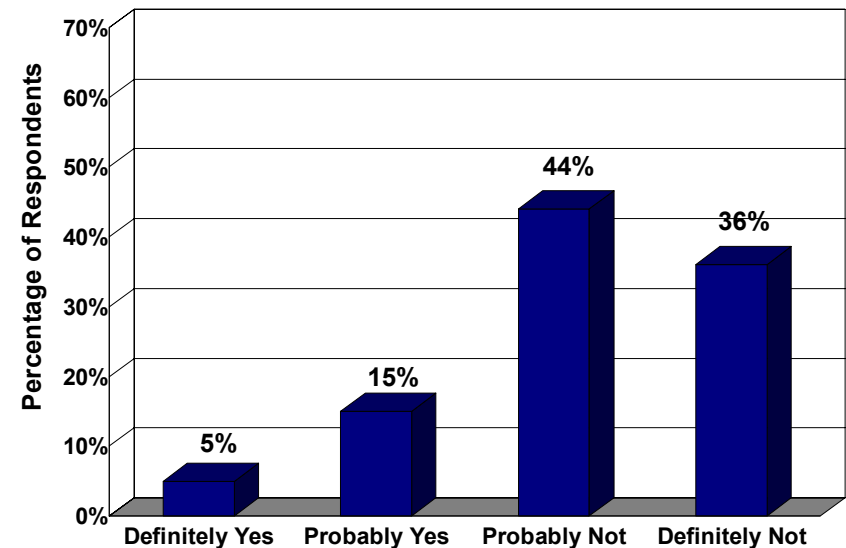
Data from the 2002 Indiana Youth Tobacco Survey Show:

- More than one third of high school and middle school students (37%) have heard about alternative tobacco products (Advance) or tobacco lozenges (Ariva).
- Almost 20% of high school and middle school students believed that alternative products are **definitely** or **probably safer** than cigarettes.
- Forty-four percent (44%) of middle and high school students stated that these alternative products are only **probably not safer** than cigarettes.

Implications

- Many Hoosier youth (37%) are aware of “alternative” tobacco products and most (64%) did not express a strong belief that these alternative products are **not safer** than smoking. These Hoosier youth may be susceptible to tobacco industry marketing of “safer” alternatives to smoking.
- Additional education and social marketing efforts are needed to convince Hoosier youth that smokeless tobacco and especially the alternative tobacco products are not a safe alternative to smoking.

Do you think that new kinds of products like these would be safer than regular cigarettes?
Responses from high school and middle school students.



Sources: 2002 Indiana Youth Tobacco Survey; Kozlowski LT, Pillitteri JS. Beliefs about “Light” and “Ultra Light” cigarette: an overview of early efforts and published research. Tobacco Control 2001; Thun MS, Burns DM. Health impact of “reduced yield” cigarettes: a critical assessment of the epidemiological evidence. Tobacco Control 2001; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Health Consequences of Smoking: A Report of the Surgeon General*. Office on Smoking and Health, 2004